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House of Representatives

The House met at 10 a.m. and was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. COSTA).

DESIGNATION OF SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following communication from the Speaker:

WASHINGTON, DC,

February 24, 2021.

I hereby appoint the Honorable JIM COSTA to act as Speaker pro tempore on this day.

NANCY PELOSI,

Speaker of the House of Representatives.

MORNING-HOUR DEBATE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the order of the House of January 4, 2021, the Chair will now recognize Members from lists submitted by the majority and minority leaders for morning-hour debate.

The Chair will alternate recognition between the parties, with time equally allocated between the parties and each Member other than the majority and minority leaders and the minority whip limited to 5 minutes, but in no event shall debate continue beyond 11:50 a.m.

GREEN ENERGY

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Oregon (Mr. BLUMENAUER) for 5 minutes.

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Mr. Speaker, the Nation watched in horror at the terrible situation in Texas this last week with horrific weather conditions and then the aftermath dealing with problems with safe drinking water and supply. It was leavened a little bit by the plight of TED CRUZ who is notoriously struggling to tell the truth this time as he fled his State and leaving his constituents behind and then

watching him contort trying to change his story over the course of the next few days. It was sort of a national joke.

But what was happening in Texas was not a joke. These conditions were unprecedented. But they found Texas unable to really respond in a way despite the fact that 10 years ago there was a similar situation. It is fascinating. TED CRUZ isn't the only one struggling with the truth. The Governor of Texas, Governor Abbott, sought to blame wind energy for their plight. Wind energy, which supplies less than 10 percent of the total energy supply for the State, performed better than fossil fuel which provided the majority of it.

Think for a moment how they attempted to target the Green New Deal and AOC. While TED CRUZ was struggling to get his story straight, our colleague, ALEXANDRIA OCASIO-CORTEZ, was raising millions of dollars to help people in Texas cope. Blaming a Green New Deal which has never actually been enacted—it is an aspirational goal—is foolish. What we have seen in Texas with those extreme weather events are a preview of coming attractions.

What we saw in Australia this last year and in the Western United States with horrific wildfires, looking at a once-in-a-century weather event is becoming routine, and it is going to happen more and more frequently.

I would suggest that Texas leadership could take a look at what they have done. Their famously deregulated energy system has given the family with a \$16,000 electric bill or former Governor and Energy Secretary Rick Perry said: Well, people would just be happy to have a few days without energy to be free of the dangers of Federal regulation.

I think people in the surrounding States that survived much better and didn't have \$16,000 monthly electric bills might review that. I would suggest that the folks in Texas leadership

could start first of all by telling the truth. It is not renewable energy, it was fossil fuel that failed and continued reliance on fossil fuel is going to make events like this much, much more frequent.

We need to deal with reliability in Texas and around the country. Last, but not least, we must fight for climate justice and a low carbon future. That will help make these situations less frequent and more bearable, and it is a path forward that we can take confident that history will reflect we were on the right side.

BIDEN COVID BAILOUT PACKAGE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. BUDD) for 5 minutes.

Mr. BUDD. Mr. Speaker, over the past year, the government has appropriated over \$4 trillion—that is with a T—in COVID relief. Now we are standing here this week and we are debating whether or not to add another \$2 trillion to that enormous total.

But what should shock taxpayers across the country is that \$1 trillion of COVID relief still remains unspent. That means funding is still left over from last December and funding is still left over from even last March. Now, that is money that the current administration hasn't spent for vaccines, hasn't spent for testing, hasn't spent on schools reopening, and certainly not even to reopen our country.

Mr. Speaker, I think people in Washington often forget that the dollars that we are debating really aren't ours. They are the next generation's, and this money belongs to that generation and to the American people.

Is it not too much to ask what the current administration plans to do with the \$1 trillion in unspent taxpayer funds, Mr. Speaker, especially before we toss another \$2 trillion on to that pile?

□ This symbol represents the time of day during the House proceedings, e.g., □ 1407 is 2:07 p.m.

Matter set in this typeface indicates words inserted or appended, rather than spoken, by a Member of the House on the floor.



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